

# THE GULL



Golden Gate Audubon Society

Volume 66 Number 6 JUNE 1984

Berkeley, California

## ANNUAL MEETING And a Wine Tasting for Audubon Canyon Ranch

As described in detail in The Gull for May, GGAS is sponsoring a wine and cheese tasting fund raiser for Audubon Canyon Ranch at the beautiful Lyford House at the Richardson Bay Audubon Center, Sunday, June 10 at 2 p.m. (376 Greenwood Beach Rd. Tiburon). Cost is \$12.50 per person for tickets. If you do not have a reservation you may phone the GGAS office to determine whether more tickets are available. George Peyton and Dr. Martin Griffin are providing the cheese and wines for the occasion. Every penny goes to support ACR.

The affair will be preceded by the GGAS annual meeting at 1:30 p.m. in the classroom at the Richardson Bay Audubon Center.

## FACING A NEW FISCAL YEAR

During the next several months your board of directors will be facing some difficult decisions. Shortages of both people and money are forcing us to limit the services we provide, and choices must be made as to which services will be reduced and by how much. A small, randomly chosen group of our members received a letter from one of the board members asking for your help. The response was very encouraging, so we have decided to share more fully with all the members the decisions we face. We would like your help both in making these decisions and in meeting our goals.

The focus of the board's decision is on the budget for the fiscal year beginning June 1, 1984. Below is a summary of that budget, as well as the 1983-4 budget, and the current (April 1, 1983) projection for the fiscal year 1983-4. The summary is followed by a discussion of each line of the budget which provides a thorough overview of GGAS operations.

This should be an exciting time for our organization. We have a skilled and energetic executive director; we have received donations of an excellent computer system (complete with peripherals) and an office copying machine. We have a dedicated core of volunteers; we have the largest

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## FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

**Friday-Sunday, June 1-3 — Birding by Ear in Yosemite.** See May Gull for details.

**Saturday/Sunday, June 16/17 Mono-Basin.** See May Gull for details (Note change in date).

**Wednesday, June 13 — Mini-trip to Redwood Regional Park.** Meet at the park at 9:30 a.m. Take the Warren Freeway, turn left onto Redwood Rd. and proceed about three miles to Redwood Gate, southern entrance to the park. Leave cars at the small parking lot just inside park on left. Bring lunch. We should see Black-headed Grosbeak; Swainson's Thrush; Northern Oriole; Solitary, Hutton's and Warbling Vireos.

Leader: Delpha de Timofeev (632-5176).

**Saturday/Sunday, June 23/24 — Yuba Pass and Vicinity.** On Saturday meet at 9 a.m. at Wild Plum Campground. We will caravan to Sierra Valley and see many of the birds of the eastern Sierra including Yellow-headed Blackbird. On Sunday meet at 8 a.m. at the Yuba pass summit. We will bird the mountain areas for summer residents including flycatchers, warblers and Calliope Hummingbirds.

Take I-80 to Truckee, go north on Hwy. 89 to Sierraville and take Hwy. 49 west to Wild Plum Campground, about one-half mile from Sierra City. Or take Hwy. 49 north east from Auburn. Camping is available at the Wild Plum campground on Hwy. 49 (U.S. Forest Service). Lodging is available at Sierra City: Sierra Chalet (916-862-1110), Buttes Motel (916-862-1170), Herrington's Sierra Pines (916-

862-1151), Sierra Buttes Inn Motel (916-862-1122..) Leader: Peter Allen (981-7199). (✓)

**Friday-Sunday, June 29-July 1 — Lassen Volcanic National Park.** This is the annual GGAS family camping excursion. Join the Murphy family for a weekend of birding and hiking at Lassen. The more serious birders will meet on Friday and Sunday mornings by the store at Manzanita Lake Campground at 6:15 a.m. We will spend two to three hours birding the lake and nearby area. After a quick breakfast we will meet again at 10:30 a.m. at the store for a hike through some of Lassen's beautiful back country on Friday, and will bird along the park road on Sunday. The hike will be about three miles in length and leisurely paced for the convenience of small children and the leaders. Bring a bottle of your favorite wine to our campsite on Friday evening after 8 p.m. for our third annual wine tasting. Be sure to bring your own glass and chair, we will provide the corkscrew and campfire.

On Saturday, we will meet at 7:30 a.m. and caravan north to Burney Falls, Fall River Valley and Baum Lake. This will be an all-day excursion of about 100 miles. We are planning to have lunch at Lake Britton so bring swim wear and a towel. We will spend two to three hours there, so if you don't plan to swim bring a book. We will end the day at Uncle Runt's Restaurant (gourmet?! center for the Lassen region).

In the past years we have seen Willow, Hammond's and Dusky Flycatcher, Black Swift, Bald Eagle,

Osprey, Townsend's Solitaire, Mountain Bluebird and most of the warblers which breed in the mountains.

Wear sturdy shoes and be prepared to pack a lunch and liquids. Suntan lotion, a hat, mosquito repellent and warm clothing for cold nights may also be needed. Plan to stop at our camp any evening for a campfire. You will need a cup and a folding chair so we can huddle together and try to stay warm.

From the Bay Area drive north on I-5 to its junction with Hwy. 44 in Redding. Go east on Hwy. 44 to the northeast entrance of Lassen. Camping facilities are available at Manzanita Lake. Lodging is available about 15 miles north of the park at Doan's Hat Creek Resort, Old Station (916-335-2359). Other information can be obtained from the park headquarters, Mineral CA. 96063. Be sure to check at Doan's or the park bulletin boards for our campsite number and further details or changes in the schedule. Leaders: Dan and Joan Murphy (564-0074). \$ (✓)

**Saturday, July 7 — San Mateo County Coast.** Meet at Pescadero Beach parking lot at the intersection of Hwy. 1 and Pescadero Rd. at 8 a.m. Please carpool to this point if possible as parking is limited. Bring lunch and a jacket; the weather can be cool along the coast. Brown Pelicans, Heermann's Gull and Black Oystercatchers are probable. We may also see Harlequin Ducks, Black Swifts and Bank Swallows at Año Nuevo. (There is an entrance fee at Año Nuevo). Leader: Jon Zablackis (642-9121.) (✓)

**Sunday, July 8 — Chimney Rock, Pt. Reyes.** Join us for our annual trip to see nesting Black Oystercatchers and Western Gulls. Meet at 9 a.m. at the

Pt. Reyes National Seashore Headquarters near Olema. We will caravan to the coast. Bring lunch, liquids and a spotting scope if you have one. Leader Betty Short (921-3020 weekdays). (✓)

Carpooling arrangements can be made for trips marked (✓). Call Kate Partridge at 236-9053 and leave a message. She will contact you.

**Problems:** If for any reason you have difficulty getting in touch with a field trip leader or need information regarding a trip, call Shirley (387-8290) or the GGAS office (843-2222).

#### — FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

## OBSERVATIONS: APRIL Through May 2

### WATERBIRDS

A Red-necked Grebe near Crab Cove, Alameda, April 8 (HG, LF, PG, DR) was rather far inside the Bay for a spring date. Seven Cattle Egrets were near Martinez dump April 5 (BW), one stayed through April 8 at Hayward shoreline (BR), and yet another spent the month through April 22 at Lake Merritt and its egret colony (HC, ZD, SFB).

Lingering coastal Snow Geese remained to at least April 13 at Lawson's Landing (GF) and to April 17 at Crittenden Marsh, Santa Clara County (BB). A Brant visited Alameda South Shore off and on for the entire month (LF, DR, HG, PG, mob). Although tens of thousands of Brants migrate up our coast during the spring, individuals rarely stray into San Francisco Bay, where many wintered years ago.

Two flocks of Lesser Golden-Plovers were last seen in April: ten at Lawson's Landing to April 13 (GF) and five to six at Spaletta Ranch to

April 29 (DW). A breeding plumaged **Stilt Sandpiper** at Crittenden Marsh, April 14 (BB, et al.) was one of very few spring records for Northern California.

The **Common Black-headed Gull** apparently departed Stockton Sewage Ponds with most of the Bonaparte's Gulls just after April 12 (DY). The **Little Gull** was also seen through this date (mob), but two **Little Gulls** were present April 15 (DY) to 22 (DT). Only one was found there April 27 (DW).

#### LANDBIRDS

Male Costa's Hummingbirds staged an irruption in Northern California, even reaching Cresent City (RAE) and Redding (BY)! Bay Area arrivals were in Rohnert Park March 27 (KC), the mouth of Del Puerto Canyon April 8 (AE, et al.), Rodeo Lagoon April 27 (CF) and two along Mines Road May 1 (JMS, et al.). Del Puerto Canyon is the only regional site of known regular occurence, and the arrival date there was apparently quite early, closer to what one expects in the bird's desert strongholds.

Two Gray Flycatchers were well described in Briones Regional Park April 23 and at Mountain View Cemetery, Oakland, April 22 (both MP). The four **Empidonax** flycatchers that breed in California but not in the Bay Area all seem to be regular though very scarce migrants here. It will be interesting to see the pattern of reports of these difficult species now that good identification information is available in two new field guides, especially as birders employ their newly acquired information beyond their current level of experience and or ability. We expect both correct and incorrect reports to increase, as may our difficulty in distinguishing among them.

A Cassin's Kingbird was by Panoche Rd. two miles east of Little Panoche Rd. April 17 (PLat). Mitchell Canyon, Mt. Diablo, had a Townsend's Solitaire April 2 (MS, SS).

A bird singing the very distinct song of the **Prairie Warbler** was followed up hill but never seen at Audubon Canyon Ranch April 8 (EH). This rare fall vagrant is virtually unknown here at other seasons. A **Black-and-white Warbler** was at Stinson Beach April 6 (JMS).

A male **Lark Bunting** was found six miles west of Woodland March 30-April 21 (BM, et al., KH). Another early **Grasshopper Sparrow** was at Hayward Shoreline April 5 (HG). Two **Lapland Longspurs** were at this same site April 8, and a single individual was seen May 2 (both BR). San Francisco's male **Great-tailed Grackle** was again or still frequenting Fort Mason April 4-12 (DW, JMu).

Lawrence's Goldfinches spread into the East Bay in unusual locations and numbers. They were abundant along Mines Rd. (where regular) April 29 (JM, et al.). Flocks were found in two areas of Mt. Diablo (AG, WG, JR, et al.). Up to three became resident in Briones Regional Park April 23-28 (MP, JR, SFB, mob).

**Observers:** Stephen F. Bailey, Neil Blank, Bill Bousman, Dorothy Calabrese, Kurt Campbell, Susan Collins, Herold Connon, Zachary Denning, Art Edwards, Richard A. Erickson, Carter Faust, Leora Feeney, Gary Fellers, Albert Ghiorso, Wilma Ghiorso, Helen Green, Paul Green, Kem Hainebach, Ed Harper, Peter La Tourrette, Anne Macpherson, Betty Matteson, Bruce Maxwell (BM), many observers (mob), Joseph Morlan (JM), Janet Murphy (JMu), Michael Perrone

Dave Quady, David Rice, Bob Richmond, Jean Richmond, Karen Sanderson, Craig Sells, Jean Marie Spoelman, Maury Stern, Susan Stern, David Trollman, David Wimpfheimer, Betty Wyatt, David Yee, Bub Yutzy.

— STEPHEN F. BAILEY,  
Observation Editor  
Museum of Vertebrate Zoology,  
University of California,  
Berkeley, CA 94720  
(Phone 548-9507 or Joseph Morlan  
at 524-7421)

Speaker of the Assembly he has great influence. Let him know that the Bay Area is depending on him.

2. Write Governor Deukmejian. Tell him you object to any such water project, especially one that does not include protection of S.F. Bay waters and wildlife and all other Northern California water. Governor Deukmejian's bill, instead of including protective clauses that would specifically insure the preservation, at present levels (or better), of fish, wildlife and water would only require a "best effort" on the part of the Departments of Fish and Game and Water Resources. And these "best effort" measures would be decided administratively, ie. by the heads of these departments in conjunction with the Governor, with little or no public input.

This is critically important to the future of the Bay and all of Northern California. Please write today. Both men can be reached at: State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814.

## CONSERVATION NOTES

### AN ULTIMATUM ON WATER

Proposition 9, the Peripheral Canal measure lost by 63% of the statewide vote in 1982. Despite this clear message from the public Governor Deukmejian has introduced a new Peripheral Canal Bill, SB 1369. This new project would be even worse than Prop. 9 because there are none of the protective clauses for S.F. Bay included in Prop. 9. Worst of all, the Governor has stated that if the legislature does not give him what he wants, he will simply ignore them and go ahead with the project anyway. If he succeeds in this endeavor, the Bay will, in all likely-hood, suffer considerable wildlife losses with the possibility of totally losing its striped bass population.

What can you do?

1. Write Speaker of the Assembly, Willie Brown. Urge him to protect our bay and its resources, and to oppose Deukmejian's plans. Also Willie Brown has a bill of his own, AB 3631, that would set standards of water and wildlife in the Bay and thus prevent the dangers we are now facing. Urge him to make this bill as strong as possible. Even if you don't live in Willie Brown's district he is the leading Bay Area assemblyman and as

## June Ballot Measures

### 18 and 19

On the June 1984 primary ballot California voters will decide on two very important bond acts which may determine the future of the State Parks System and the protection of California's wetlands and other fish and wildlife habitats. Because of the importance of these two issues the GGAS board has voted to endorse for passage Propositions 18 and 19.

#### Proposition 18

The California Park and Recreational Facilities Act of 1984 (Prop. 18) will provide \$370 million for local and state parks and emphasizes protection and improvement of existing parks, with acquisition of new parklands limited to land needed for operation

of current parks. With the demand for outdoor recreational facilities becoming greater — especially in urban areas — many people are being turned away from overcrowded and overused recreational facilities. Each year it becomes more difficult for local governments to find budget funds necessary to maintain and improve our parks. Proposition 18, if passed, will provide funds for recreation agencies to develop recreational facilities where they are most needed. It also will provide funds for protection of our coast, wildlife, rare and endangered species, acquisition of new parkland in the Santa Monica Mountains and protection for San Francisco Bay. Also, for the first time, a specific amount of funding will be designated for local historical preservation projects.

\$25 million of the bond funds will be used for wildlife conservation, including \$15 million for acquisition and development of wildlife management areas, and \$10 million for acquisition of habitats for our rare and endangered species in California. These funds will be important new additions to our wildlife protection programs.

#### **Proposition 19**

If The Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Act of 1984 is also passed the State Wildlife Conservation Board would receive only \$5 million from the park bond act in lieu of the up to \$25 million allocated in that act, the remaining \$20 million allocated in the park bond act going for State Park System development and to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

Of even more importance to our efforts to protect our remaining wetlands and other fish and wildlife habitats is the passage of Proposition 19. It will provide \$85 million to acquire wetlands and other habitat areas.

During the past century, California has lost 90% of her wetland area. Wetlands provide essential food and shelter to many irreplaceable species of birds, fish and other wildlife. Without some state action forthcoming, the possibility of catastrophic results for California fish and wildlife becomes almost inevitable.

Over the years we have passed many laws designed to protect wildlife; unless we provide a place for them to live these measures are meaningless. Proposition 19 will help to save valuable areas by providing funds to the Wildlife Conservation Board and the Coastal Conservancy to acquire, enhance and develop wetlands throughout California. \$40 million will go to the Wildlife Conservation Board for inland or coastal marsh and habitat areas and \$10 million to improve management of fisheries by restoring inland waterways. The Coastal Conservancy will receive \$20 million to provide grants to local public agencies within the coastal zone and San Francisco Bay. \$10 million will be provided for projects carried out directly by the Conservancy in addition \$5 million will be available to purchase land and secure shelter for rare and endangered species.

Proposition 19 is the only bond measure specifically designed to protect our vital ecological breeding ground and represents perhaps our greatest opportunity to protect fish and wildlife to date.

Because we see these two bond measures as vitally important to the protection of our state parks and our dwindling wetlands, the GGAS Board of Directors urges you to vote YES on Propositions 18 and 19 on the June ballot.

— DAN MURPHY, President

## *Another Flash*

The National Geographic Society's FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA is now in stock at the GGAS office

## THE NEW FISCAL YEAR continued

membership of any chapter of Audubon in the country; and we are situated in an area that combines unlimited outdoor recreational activities with a long list of threats to the quality of those activities as well as human and wildlife inhabitants of the area.

Instead of an exciting time, we face a critical shortage of the human and financial resources necessary to meet our goals. There are many things that you, as members of GGAS, can do to help; but before we get to that, let's consider the specifics of the decisions we face. But please remember, if you share our interest in and concern for the environment, you can make a difference.

### The Budget

	1983-84	1983-84	1984-85
	Budget	April	Proposed
	Estimate		Budget
Revenue	\$50,040	\$45,540	\$46,350
Expenses			
Office	9,852	9,985	10,238
Personnel	14,646	14,295	14,280
The GULL	17,556	21,580	18,650
Meetings	2,750	2,990	2,800
Conservation	2,750	2,225	1,900
Other	2,196	1,785	1,850
Total Expenses	49,750	52,860	49,718
Gain/Loss	290	-7,320	-3,368

### Revenue

The main source of revenue for GGAS (about 80%) is our share of each member's dues paid to the National Audubon Society. For each family membership renewal the chapter gets \$12. In 1983-84 we experienced about a 12% drop in membership. We have begun some efforts to stimulate new members in order to end this trend.

The other 20% of revenues comes from the following sources: donations from individuals, interest on our bank accounts, subscriptions to The GULL, sales of books and other items, money from participants in the Christmas Count, and money from the annual fund raiser.

The fiscal 1984 - 85 budget anticipates that we will be successful in stabilizing membership and even increase it slightly. If the present downward trend is not stopped the actual revenue will be less than the budgeted amount.

### Office Expenses

Included are rent, utilities, telephone, supplies, postage and insurance. In 1984-85 we expect slightly higher costs for supplies as a result of acquiring the computer and copier. We are very excited about the potential uses of the computer in all phases of our operations.

### Personnel

This category includes salaries, payroll taxes, health insurance, and training for employees. Currently we are blessed with a very hard working albeit underpaid, executive director. This budget does not include any raise for her, although it is well deserved. The budget does include salary for a part-time employee (15 hours per month) to perform clerical duties in

the office, mainly maintenance of the membership list. It is essential that someone other than the director do this work to free her time for other duties. In addition, there is much more that could be done to free her from the time-consuming burden of some of the clerical work if the human or financial resources were available.

### GULL Expense

This category consists of the cost to print and mail The GULL to members and subscribers. During 1983-84 an effort was made to enlarge The GULL by adding more articles and information. The result of these efforts, we thought, was a much more interesting GULL. However, the cost was a \$4,000 budget deficit. In 1983-84 The GULL will have 200 pages in eleven issues. The 1984-85 budget calls for a GULL of only 140 pages in eleven issues.

We think that The GULL is vital to the health of the organization and would like to see it grow. At this time, however, our limited resources will not allow that growth.

### Meeting and Program Expense

This category consists of the cost of putting on general membership meetings each month, sending representatives to conferences, the Christmas Count, educational efforts in the community, books and subscriptions for our library, the Rare Bird Alert and the Marin Breeding Atlas. The 1984-85 budget has all these areas at or just below their levels in 1983-84 except that there will be no new books for the library. We would like to expand our efforts in many of these areas, particularly education in the community, but our resources do not permit such expansion.

### Conservation Expense

This category is a grouping of all

the conservation related expenses, and is administered by the Conservation Committee. The activities grouped here include Action Alerts, memberships in and donations to other "front-line" conservation organizations, an on-going study of the breeding in the Bay Area of the Least Tern, and a scholarship which is awarded annually for someone to attend the Audubon Camp in the West.

As you see, our 1984-85 Budget calls for spending only \$1,900 or about 4% of our revenue on conservation-related activities. We are fortunate to have a core of interested people on the Conservation Committee who would like to take an active role in the conservation issues that face the Bay Area and California. These issues include the survival of the California Condor, the preservation of Mono Lake, the passage of the bottle bill, the problems associated with peripheral canal type projects and other similar threats to the Bay, the preservation of the Emeryville Crescent, the developments that are planned or underway at the Berkeley waterfront, at China Basin, and on San Bruno Mountain and many similar issues. With the current administrations in Washington and Sacramento it is all the more important that our views on these issues be expressed. However, the current resources do not permit us to be as active in these areas as we would like.

### Other Expenses

These expenses are primarily accounting and audit services and some miscellaneous taxes and fees.

### Summary

This proposed budget represents a drastic "cut" from what we would like to do. In particular, in the area of The GULL, education in the community and conservation there is much

**GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY**

2718 TELEGRAPH AVENUE, #206  
BERKELEY, CA 94705

## FREE DRAWING

### GENERAL MEETING — SEPTEMBER 1984

We would like your thoughts on the operation of the Golden Gate Audubon Society. Please take a moment to complete this questionnaire, which is also your entry in the drawing to be held at the first general meeting in September. Please be sure to return the completed questionnaire to be eligible for the prize.

Please circle your answers. Please add comments and explanations, information or details.

1. Please indicate the three subjects in which you are most interested:

- A. Conservation and ecology
  - B. Field trips
  - C. The GULL
  - D. Fund raising
  - E. Program organizing
  - F. Education
  - G. Membership
  - H. Publicity
  - I. Social activities
  - J. Clerical work
  - K. Work with a computer
  - L. Assist with refreshments at meetings
2. If called, would you be willing to serve the society as a volunteer?

3. If available, approximately how much time?

- A. One day a week
- B. One day a month
- C. Attend a monthly meeting
- D. Make phone calls and/or write a short letter once a month
- E. Other

4. Would you care to make contribution toward GGAS operations? \$.....

5. Whether you are able to participate personally or not, please indicate what you feel could be done to improve the effectiveness of the Society in any or all areas.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

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more we can and want to do. However, even with this reduced budget, we anticipate a deficit of nearly \$3,400. This is not acceptable for a non-profit (non-loss) organization. Therefore, the Board will be considering steps to bring the budget into balance. Some of those steps are:

- 1) Increase the charge for the Farallon field trip to bring the fare up to the market rate. Estimated revenue \$1,000.
- 2) Eliminate the 15 hour per month part-time employee. This depends on finding volunteers to replace the employee. Estimated savings \$1,200.
- 3) Limit **The GULL** to ten issues for the year. Estimated savings \$1,750.
- 4) Eliminate the contribution of \$500 for the Marin Breeding Atlas. Savings \$500.
- 5) Further reduce conservation activities. Estimated savings \$500.
- 6) Eliminate Action Alerts. Estimated savings \$500.
- 7) Eliminate the scholarship to the Audubon Camp in the West. Estimated savings \$600.

Some combination of these actions can bring the budget into balance, and this will be done. As the monthly revenue and expenditure figures are available during the year, the board plans to adjust spending to available funds. However, the organization that will be left will be the skeleton of what it can be, and what we would like it to be. If you share our goals and interests there are many ways you can help put the "beef" back in the GGAS organization. To make it easier for you to get in touch with us we have included a questionnaire. We hope you will use it.

### What You Can Do

Here is a list of some of the things you can do to make GGAS a more effective organization. Perhaps you can think of more.

- 1) **We can use your money.** If your membership in Audubon has expired you can renew it right away. Please consider it not as "just another magazine", but as a membership in a local conservation organization that is trying to provide many services to its members and the community. Also, if you are able, please consider making a tax deductible contribution to GGAS to help us expand our efforts.
- 2) **We can use your time.** The bulk of the volunteer work at GGAS is done by a small core of dedicated, over worked people. We would like very much to see that group grow. If you have any spare time and would like to donate it to the organization, there are many ways it can be utilized. For example, there are many clerical tasks to be done. Some of these involve use of the computer, and for those of you who are interested, we would be glad to train you. We can also use people on our Hospitality Committee, to help with refreshments at our general meetings. We can always use more interested people on the Conservation Committee, no particular expertise is required. People are needed to assist in setting the programs for the general meetings, publicizing GGAS events, organizing fund-raisers and the list goes on.
- 3) **We can use your ideas.** If you haven't time to help out, but have some ideas on conservation issues we could pursue, of services we could provide, of fund raising activities we could provide, of fund raising activities we could sponsor, let us know. For example, we would love to move

into corporate-donated (tax-deductible) office space that is larger and in a better location than our present office. If you have ideas, let us know.

4) We can use your encouragement. Even if you have no money, time or ideas, if you are interested in our work and appreciate our efforts, use the attached questionaire and send us a note telling us what you think.

5) We can use your complaints. We are sure there are some things we are doing wrong. If you think so, let us know.

We send you a warm thanks for your interest and support.

—ROSS JENNINGS, Treasurer

## **REMINDER: FOURTH OF JULY CRUISE FOR MONO LAKE**

The ARGO will leave St. Francis Yacht Club in San Francisco at 3:30 p.m. and return at 10:30 p.m. after the fireworks display is over. The fee for the cruise and dinner is \$51. See the May GULL for details. Mail check payable to Mono Lake Committee with an self-addressed and stamped envelope to Mildred Bennett at 2719 Marin Ave., Berkeley, CA 94708. If you have questions call Mildred (526-1260) after June 17, or the Sierra Club office (658-7470) before that.

## **THE CALIFORNIA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE**

Ornithology is one of the few sciences which still relies heavily on the contributions of amateurs. Most of what is known about the seasonal distribution of birds is based on the reports of recreational birders. One of

the great thrills of birding is the chance of encountering an unexpected species. The rarer the bird, the greater the burden of proof required to officially establish the record. The California Bird Records Committee acts as a final arbiter for species which occur in the State less often than an average of four times per year. The decisions of the committee are published annually in the quarterly journal *WESTERN BIRDS*.

The committee consists of a rotating membership of ten experts, each elected for a three year term, and includes a secretary elected annually who serves as chairperson. The records consist of all the documentation submitted by the observers including descriptions of the bird, photographs, and, occasionally, sound recordings. For a record to be accepted it must receive at least nine affirmative votes. If it receives eight or fewer it is published as unaccepted. Thus it only takes two member's questioning the identification of any claimed record to reject that claim. Currently the committee reviews about 100 records yearly and rejects about 15% of them.

All voting is by mail and records circulate through the committee up to four times before a final decision is reached. Each member gives the reasons for his or her vote and these comments become part of the final record. All records are ultimately deposited at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology in Los Angeles where they are available to all researchers and interested parties.

There are similar committees in other states and in most European countries established as the best way of verifying the scientific validity of an increasing number of rarities reported by an increasing number of

birders. In the past, only records supported by specimens were considered valid by professional ornithologists. Today the collecting (shooting) of rare birds is generally unfeasible and undesirable. The growth of records committees reflects the need to screen sight-records, so that those which are adequately documented will achieve the scientific acceptance they deserve.

Unfortunately some birders fail to submit their observations. The most common reason is that they find writing descriptions tedious or think it takes the fun away from birding. My view is just the opposite. I enjoy writing details of my own sightings and I always learn something from doing so. When I see a rarity, I know that I will write a description. I look at the bird very carefully. My awareness becomes heightened as I watch the bird and usually I see details that I have never noticed on that species before. If there are other birders, I try to get their opinions on each detail. No two people perceive colors in exactly the same way and comparing notes is always educational. The intensity of close, detailed observation adds immeasurably to the excitement of seeing the bird.

Another reason some birders fail to submit their sightings is fear . . . fear of rejection. The scientific community is naturally skeptical and birders should expect that claims of rarities will need proof. One can usually avoid rejection by acting wisely when seeing a rarity. Always carry a pocket notebook in the field. Do not rely on memory. Write notes immediately after observation **before** consulting any field guide. Get others to see the bird and urge them to write descriptive notes. Call the Rare Bird Alert the same day so word of your sighting can be spread and others can confirm your

observation. Too often rare birds are reported many days after the fact and without details. Records which are unreported or which lack documentation never become part of the scientific record. Statements that the bird "looked just like the picture in the book" are inadequate.

I urge everyone who sees a rarity to participate in the scientific process by writing a description and submitting it to the Records Committee. This is excellent practice for Christmas Counts when count compilers ask for details of unusual birds. Such a request may seem quite daunting if you have never written up details of a bird before.

Many birders call the Rare Bird Alert tape each week and seek out the rarities which they hear about. Few ever submit descriptions of these observations. Some people assume that it is up to the finder of the bird to write the description. It would certainly help if all finders would send in details, but sadly many do not. Worse, several records have been rejected because full details from all the observers could not be obtained, even though the identification was probably correct. The King Eider which spent the winter of 1982-83 at the Emeryville Marina was seen by hundreds of observers. Only three people sent in descriptions.

The committee welcomes photographs, but do not assume that photographs are enough. Some of the most controversial records the committee has dealt with were based on photographs that just did not prove the identity of the bird. A good description is far better than a bad photograph.

It is not only fun to participate in the scientific process, but I guarantee that writing descriptions and taking notes in the field will greatly improve

anyone's birding skills. If I have succeeded in motivating you to contribute observations to the Records Committee, write to the secretary, B. D. Parmeter, 2500 Emerson St., Napa, CA 94558 and request a list of species which the committee reviews and forms which can be used for reporting. The forms are intended as a guide and need not be used. A self-addressed, stamped envelope helps.

The annual reports published in *WESTERN BIRDS* often contain annotations explaining the reasons certain records were accepted or rejected. These annotations are a gold mine of up to date identification material. Subscriptions to the journal include membership in Western Field Ornithologists. \$14 payable to Western Field Ornithologists should be sent to Garth Alton, Treasurer, 17 Camino Lenada, Orinda, CA 94563.

—JOSEPH MORLAN

Records Committee Member

## THE BACK YARD BIRDER

Recently, I came across a word new to me in bird watching jargon. *Jizz* refers to a distinctive physical "attitude" of a bird. It is a combination of shape, posture and behavior, sometimes more reliable than mere observation of field marks. Knowing a specie's *jizz* is the result of long experience with it and similar species. It is undeniably a special talent which impresses the novice birder as well as the more experienced one.

Many times I've noted that birding can be enjoyed on many levels. Who can say that the life-lister who chases birds across the continent has more fun than the person who looks at what bird is munching at his feeder? Seri-

ous, or not, most observers are keen to identify a particular bird. Identification skills cannot be taught. Some people have a knack for it, being born with keen eyesight and hearing. But everyone must start from scratch. Begin with excellent field glasses (see *Back Yard Birder*, December, 1982) and continue by poring over a variety of field guides. Sharpen your skills by actively birding at every opportunity. Most valuable is the friendship of someone as interested and as knowledgeable a birder as you are. Sharing tips on behavior and song identification often helps. To me, the first few notes of a Song Sparrow's tune is similar to the beginning of Beethoven's 5th Symphony, no doubt a reflexion of my musical background.

Through hours of field experience, one can become fairly accurate at pinning down a species by a knowledge of the type of voice, posture, likely environment and the behavior of an individual. While bird voice recordings and drawings or pictures of birds are rarely exactly what you are hearing or seeing, by a process of elimination you can narrow down your choices. With interest and time you no doubt will develop the knowledge of several birds' *jizz*.

—MEG PAULETICH

## MONO LAKE BIKEATHON

August 27 a band of determined cyclists will leave the LA Dept. of Water and Power headquarters to carry water to Mono Lake in the fifth annual Mono Lake Bikeathon. It is a six day event, effective in raising both consciousness and funds for Mono Lake. Last year's ride attracted 50 cyclists and raised \$18,000 for Mono Lake.

Audubon members, especially, are invited to participate. Young, old, beginner or expert. If you would like to cycle on the trip, or can volunteer a van or truck for a support vehicle, phone or write Steve Osgood at LA office of the Committee: 1355 Westwood Blvd., #6, Los Angeles, CA 90024, or (213) 477-5754.

## JOB OPENING

The Mono Lake Committee is looking for an executive director to administer this 6,000 member environmental public interest group. The successful candidate will have at least five years experience in personnel and financial management; familiarity with environmental issues and politics; background of working with the media and an over-all capability of managing an organization which relies entirely on merchandise sales, membership dues, donations and special events for its funding.

Salary range is \$24,00 - \$26,00. Extensive travel required within California. Send resume, including references and salary history to: Search Committee, Mono Lake Committee, 1355 Westwood Blvd., #6, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

## CALIFORNIA CONDOR OUTING

Meet some of the people who have been waiting, watching and working to bring the condor back from extinction at the Los Padres National Forest, a small enclave where the condor still finds conditions suitable for life. This will be Jerry Emory's third August excursion with Nature Explorations to see the condor in the wild.

Pre-trip planning meeting will be Monday, Aug. 20, 7:30 p.m. at the Peninsula Conservation Center. At McGill Campground, Saturday, August 25 at 8 a.m. to Sunday 2 p.m. Bring lunch, other food provided. Campsite Saturday night with group, also available Friday night. The cost is \$25 for adults and \$22 for children. Jerry Emory is a former executive director of GGAS.

To sign up send a check to Nature Explorations, 2253 Park Blvd., Palo Alto, CA 94306, or phone 324-8737.

## SE ARIZONA BIRD TRIP

Early August is a peak time to bird exhilarating southeast Arizona. The abundance of Arizona specialty birds are breeding during the regions "second spring" due to the July rains. The canyons, mountains and deserts are especially attractive, and Mexican hummingbirds and other vagrants add extra spice. Dr. Stephen F. Bailey will lead a limited group to most of these world-famous birding meccas Aug. 4-12. Call Steve for information, 548-9507.

## SUMMER BIRD CLASS

Dr. Stephen F. Bailey's only bird class this summer at Albany Adult School will be Woodpeckers and other Tree-hole Nesting Birds. This much requested course will introduce the twelve Central California species of woodpeckers and thirty other birds that also nest in tree-holes. These range from ducks and owls to chickadees and bluebirds. The class meets 7-9:30 p.m. on three Tuesdays, June 19 & 26 and July 3, at Albany High School.

An optional weekend trip to Sagehen Creek Field Station July 7 & 8 will

locate many of these species, Steve hopes, including the Black-backed Woodpecker. Nesting Northern Goshawks are likely. The trip is limited, but spaces may still be available. Call Steve at 548-9507 for information on either class or trip.

## BIRDS OF REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK

The College of the Redwoods at Crescent City is offering a three day course Friday through Sunday, June 22-24. Participants are responsible for their own food and lodging, and the course is free to California residents. The instructor is Gary Strachen, graduate of Humboldt State University and currently resources specialist for California State Parks at Monterey. He was formerly a ranger naturalist at Prairie Creek Redwood State Park. Write the College of the Redwoods, Del Norte Education Center, 883 West Washington Blvd., Crescent City, CA 95531 or phone (707) 464-7457.

## PIEDMONT BIRDING CLASS: MIDSUMMER

Dr. Michael Perrone will again offer a birding class through Piedmont Adult School. The course, sponsored by GGAS, will focus on identification of birds by their behavior, habitats, appearance and voice. It includes six evening classroom lectures, illustrated with color slides, and six Saturday morning bird walks. We will visit local East Bay birding sites to find resident landbirds and returning migrant shorebirds and water birds. Beginners are welcome.

For information, call Piedmont Adult School, 653-9454 or 658-3679, day or night. The class starts Wednesday,

July 11 and ends Saturday, August 18. It will meet at Piedmont Middle School, 760 Magnolia Ave.

## NEWS FROM AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

Beautiful posters are appearing on bulletin boards around the Bay Area Counties announcing: "Audubon Canyon Ranch depends on volunteers—Join us one day this spring and begin enriching your lives through a variety of courses in nature history — help encourage young people to learn to protect the environment . . . Call 383-1644 and sign up now". Thus, the Volunteer Council of ACR announces the start of another biennial training program as it has for the past fifteen years. This program arranges school visits to the Ranch, explores nature in the city with children, provides enrichment for the docents and offers opportunities to work with special groups of seniors, the handicapped and shut-ins.

The Board of ACR, to hail and thank all of these past and present workers, held a reunion and lunch on May 21 at Picher Canyon marking 15 dedicated years of service.

In the meantime, the Great Blue Herons at the rookery are raising their young, and many pairs of egrets are arriving and settling into their nests.

The final classes at Volunteer Canyon will be:

June 16-17 Photography, with build it yourself workshop . . . Joe Hall and Ray Peterson.

July 14 — Butterfly Count . . . Ray Peterson.

GGAS is providing hosts during June and July.

## GOLDEN TROUT WORKSHOP

Three one-week workshops will be held in the Sierra August 5-25, 1984. They are sponsored by members of Pasadena, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino Valley, San Fernando Valley, Eastern Sierra and Tulare County chapters of the NAS. An informal field natural history program, consisting of naturalist-led hikes, will be offered, with visiting guest naturalists at some sessions. The camp is located in the Golden Trout Wilderness in the southern portion of the High Sierra, on the eastern watershed and at an altitude of 10,000 feet. For details write or call Mrs. Cindy McKerman, 40 Sherrill Lane, Redlands, CA 92373, (714) 793-7897.

## DRAWING FOR WILDLIFE ART

To encourage your return of the enclosed questionnaire with your response to Ross Jenning's financial report and budget letter, there will be a wildlife print given to the person whose name is drawn at the September general meeting. To be eligible, send in the completed questionnaire.

## LATE ARRIVAL

The GULL was late again in May in a number of zip-code areas. The editor's copy reached him on Saturday, May 12. The Postal Service has agreed to study the problem. The issue for May was mailed at the Berkeley Main Post Office on April 25. If your copy was late, register your protest with your local Post Office. Meanwhile, we will pursue the issue with the Postal Service. This issue includes a printed note near the address label giving the mailing date.



## GGAS OFFICE MUST MOVE

May 8 the owner gave us notice that our lease, which expires May 31, will not be renewed, and that he will require the space June 8.

This gives the board a crisis and an opportunity—to find a permanent and more adequate place. It could be a house (suitably zoned); it could be office space; it could be donated by a generous supporter; it could be leased, or purchased. If you have ideas, phone or write.

—DAN MURPHY, President

## GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

For GGAS	Gift of
In Memory of	
Mr. L. Maas	Pat and Barbara Cohen
For GGAS	Judith Jacobsen
For Mono Lake	
In Memory of	
Ruth Pruitt	Mr. & Mrs. Rick de Laet

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2718 Telegraph Ave., #206, Berkeley, CA 94705-1179. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts donations and bequests will be acknowledged in The Gull as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.



Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc.

Office: 843-2222

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THE GULL

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**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RARE BIRD ALERT (recorded) 843-2211**

Mail for all individuals listed above should be sent to GGAS office.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward **THE GULL**. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes **AUDUBON** Magazine and **THE GULL**; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving **THE GULL**. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to **THE GULL** separately \$8 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$18 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

**The Gull deadline is the first of the month for the following month.**